

lesbian avengers **DYKE MANIFESTO** lesbian avengers
CALLING ALL LESBIANS
WAKE UP! WAKE UP! WAKE UP!

IT'S TIME TO GET OUT OF THE BEDS, OUT OF THE BARS AND INTO THE STREETS
TIME TO SEIZE THE POWER OF DYKE LOVE, DYKE VISION, DYKE ANGER
DYKE INTELLIGENCE, DYKE STRATEGY.

TIME TO ORGANIZE AND IGNITE. TIME TO GET TOGETHER AND FIGHT
WE'RE INVISIBLE AND IT'S NOT SAFE—NOT AT HOME, ON THE JOB, IN THE
STREETS OR IN THE COURTS

WHERE ARE OUR LESBIAN LEADERS?

WE NEED YOU

WE'RE NOT WAITING FOR THE RAPTURE. WE ARE THE APOCALYPSE.
WE'LL BE YOUR DREAM AND THEIR NIGHTMARE.

LESBIAN POWER

BELIEVE IN CREATIVE ACTIVISM: LOUD, BOLD, SEXY, SILLY, FIERCE, TASTY
AND DRAMATIC. ARREST OPTIONAL.

THINK DEMONSTRATIONS ARE A GOOD TIME AND A GREAT PLACE TO CRUISE
WOMEN. DON'T HAVE PATIENCE FOR POLITE POLITICS. ARE BORED WITH THE
BOYS. BELIEVE CONFRONTATION FOSTERS GROWTH AND STRONG BONES.
BELIEVE IN RECRUITMENT. NOT BY THE ARMY; NOT OF STRAIGHT WOMEN.
ARE NOT CONTENT WITH GHETTOS. WE WANT YOUR HOUSE, YOUR JOB, YOUR
FREQUENT FLYER MILES. WE'LL SELL YOUR JEWELRY TO SUBSIDIZE OUR
MOVEMENT. WE DEMAND UNIVERSAL HEALTH INSURANCE AND HOUSING. WE
DEMAND FOOD AND SHELTER FOR ALL HOMELESS LESBIANS. WE ARE THE
13TH STEP. THINK GIRL GANGS ARE THE WAVE OF THE FUTURE

LESBIAN SEX

THINK SEX IS A DAILY LIBATION. GOOD ENERGY FOR ACTIONS. CRAVE,
ENJOY, EXPLORE, SUFFER FROM NEW IDEAS ABOUT RELATIONSHIPS.
SLUMBER PARTIES, POLYGAMY, PERSONAL ADS, AFFINITY GROUPS.
USE LIVE ACTION WORDS: lick, waltz, eat, fuck, kiss, bite, give it up, hit the dirt

LESBIAN ACTIVISM

THINK ACTIONS MUST BE LOCAL, REGIONAL, NATIONAL, GLOBAL, COSMIC.
THINK CLOSETED LESBIANS, QUEER BOYS AND SYMPATHETIC STRAIGHTS
SHOULD SEND US MONEY.

PLAN TO TARGET HOMOPHOBES OF EVERY STRIPE AND INFILTRATE THE
CHRISTIAN RIGHT.

SCHEME AND SCREAM AND FIGHT REAL MEAN

the lesbian

AVENGERS



THE LESBIAN AVENGERS: WE RECRUIT

WELCOME AVENGER!

WHO ARE THE LESBIAN AVENGERS?

The Lesbian Avengers is a **direct action** group focused on issues vital to **lesbian survival and visibility**. There are many ideas in the lesbian community about what kind of strategies to employ--electoral and legal reform, therapy groups, social services, theoretical development. These are all valid strategies, but they are not the strategies of the Avengers. Direct action is what the Lesbian Avengers do. It is the reason for our existence.

WHAT IS DIRECT ACTION?

The real question is "Do we have to spray paint billboards to be a Lesbian Avenger?" Direct Action is a **public intervention** ranging in creative form from marches to street theatre to speakouts to cathartic spray painting of anti-hate slogans. Direct action is about getting attention, and that means media coverage. The purpose of direct action is **visibility**, so we can't be shy. As a direct action group, the Lesbian Avengers is for women who want to be activists, want to take responsibility for making things happen, want to do the shit work, have their minds blown, change their opinions, share organizing skills, and work in community. You don't have to spray paint billboards (although it's really fun)! You have to be willing to act-out publicly. We want to **empower** lesbians as leaders!

WHY NO ABSTRACT THEORETICAL DISCUSSION?

How many of us have sat in meetings arguing political theory to the point of mental and physical exhaustion, to the point where we run screaming to the nearest dance floor for release from the frustration?! To keep our work pro-active and fulfilling and successful, we focus our political discussions on the creation and purpose of an **action**. We agree to disagree on political ideology--it is too easy to create false polarities. We also encourage women to **take responsibility** for their own suggestions--be willing to make them happen. Instead of saying "Someone should..." try saying "I will..." or "Who will do this with me?" In our meetings, if you disagree with a proposal on the floor, instead of tearing it apart, propose another way of realizing the goal. The Avengers is a place where ideas are realized, where lesbians can have an impact. A crucial part of that is learning how to **propose alternatives** instead of just offering critiques. Be willing to put your body where your brain is--matter over mind!

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE LESBIAN AVENGERS

The first Lesbian Avenger group was founded in New York City in June 1992 by a group of experienced activists who were frustrated with their participation in W.H.A.M. and ACT UP where they felt overshadowed and undervalued as lesbians. They called a first meeting by handing out fluorescent green club cards reading "Lesbians! Dykes! Gay Women! We want revenge and we want it now." The idea took off and the group has created many successful actions, including: arriving at public schools on the first day of school to give out balloons inscribe "Ask about Lesbian Lives"—this was surrounding the attempt to include teaching about gay and lesbian lives in the public school curriculum; an anti-violence march and fire eating ceremony in response to the murders of gays and lesbians in Oregon; following Mayor Webb of Colorado (on his visit to New York City to promote tourism) to make sure the media focus was on Amendment 2; a Valentine's Day celebration of romantic love, butch genius and forgotten femmes, featuring the erection of a statue of Alice B. Toklas next to the statue of Gertrude Stein in Bryant Park (poetry and waltzing galore!); and organizing the Dyke March preceding the March on Washington 1993.

The Minneapolis Chapter started on International Women's Day, 1993, when a bunch of dykes got together to potluck and discuss forming a direct action group. Lesbian direct action groups have existed in the Twin Cities before—Tornado Warning, Lesbians Against Imperialism, and other informal and individual efforts. From the first meeting, we discovered the common goals of: action not theory, proactive not reactive, and fun, fun, fun! Everything that we wanted to do as a group fit with what the Lesbian Avengers were doing. Thus the Minneapolis Chapter was born! To announce our birth, we went out that night and appropriated a Navy billboard:



ACTIONS IN THE WORKS

Minneapolis Pride March; creating lesbian bar/dance space; radio and video projects; interfering with the Operation Rescue boot camp activities; continued watch-dogging of media to combat homophobic and sexist imagery; a summer celebration of dyke love; fundraising for hellraising! We welcome your ornery ideas for frisky antics and hoththeaded capers!

TOP TEN AVENGER QUALITIES

- 10. COMPASSION**
- 9. LEADERSHIP**
- 8. NO BIG EGO**
- 7. INFORMED**
- 6. FEARLESSNESS**
- 5. RIGHTEOUS ANGER**
- 4. FIGHTING SPIRIT**
- 3. PRO SEX**
- 2. GOOD DANCER**
- 1. ACCESS TO RESOURCES (XEROX MACHINES)**



MEETINGS

The Lesbian Avengers currently meet on **Sundays at 7:30p.m.** at the **Sabathani Community Center**, 310 E. 38th Street, Rm C on the 3rd Floor (in GLCAC's space). Meetings are the time to report on past actions and upcoming actions and share news. A **facilitator** (anyone who volunteers to do it) armed with the meeting **agenda** (created at the start of each meeting) keeps things focused and moving along. Anyone can introduce agenda items. Being on time is important--people have limited time and everyone's presence is essential to the success of the meeting.